



**CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN
PARK COMMISSION
TUESDAY MARCH 11, 2014
TOWN HALL ROOM**



WORK SESSION 6PM

(salmon)

1. **Call Meeting to Order**
2. **Roll Call**
3. **Approval of Agenda**
4. **MNRTF Grant Request Public Hearing Wonch Park Pavilion**
5. **2014 Park Millage Ballot Proposal Update**
6. **Board Liaisons**
7. **Other**
8. **Public Comment**
9. **Adjournment**

REGULAR MEETING – 7 PM

1. **Call Meeting to Order**
2. **Roll Call**
3. **Approval of Agenda**
4. **Public Comment**
5. **Public Hearing** (orchid)
 - a. Michigan Natural Resource Trust Fund Grant Request for Wonch Park Pavilion
6. **Commissioner Reports and Comments**
7. **Approval of Minutes** (blue)
 - a. February 11, 2014 Work Session Meeting Minutes
 - b. February 11, 2014 Regular Meeting Minutes

Individuals with disabilities requiring auxiliary aids or services should contact the Meridian Township Park Commission by writing or calling the following: Township Manager Frank Walsh, 5151 Marsh Road, Okemos, MI 48864-1198 (517-853-4250) - Ten days notice required.

8. **Communications** (tan)
9. **Director's Report** (yellow)
10. **Unfinished Business** (cherry)
PUBLIC COMMENT
11. **New Business** (pink)
PUBLIC COMMENT
 - a. Wonch Park MNRTF Grant Resolution
 - b. Harris Nature Center Foundation Nature Exploration Area
 - Resolution of Support of Grant Submission to Jackson National Life Foundation
 - Resolution of Support of Grant Submission to Dart Foundation
12. **Other Business** (green)
PUBLIC COMMENT
13. **Discussion Items** (lilac)
PUBLIC COMMENT
 - a. Park Millage Ballot Proposal
14. **Final Comments**
15. **Announcements**
 - a. Next Regular Meeting Date: Tuesday, April 8, 2014 Town Hall
 - b. Farmers' Market – J C Penney Corridor of Meridian Mall, Saturday, March 15 and April 5 & 19 from 10 am-2 pm
 - c. Van Atta Road Closed from Grand River south to bridge until June; access to Harris Nature Center from Jolly Road
16. **Public Remarks**
17. **Closed Session**
18. **Adjournment**

Park Commission Meeting

March 11, 2014

5. PUBLIC HEARINGS

- a. Grant Application - Wonch Park Pavilion and amenities

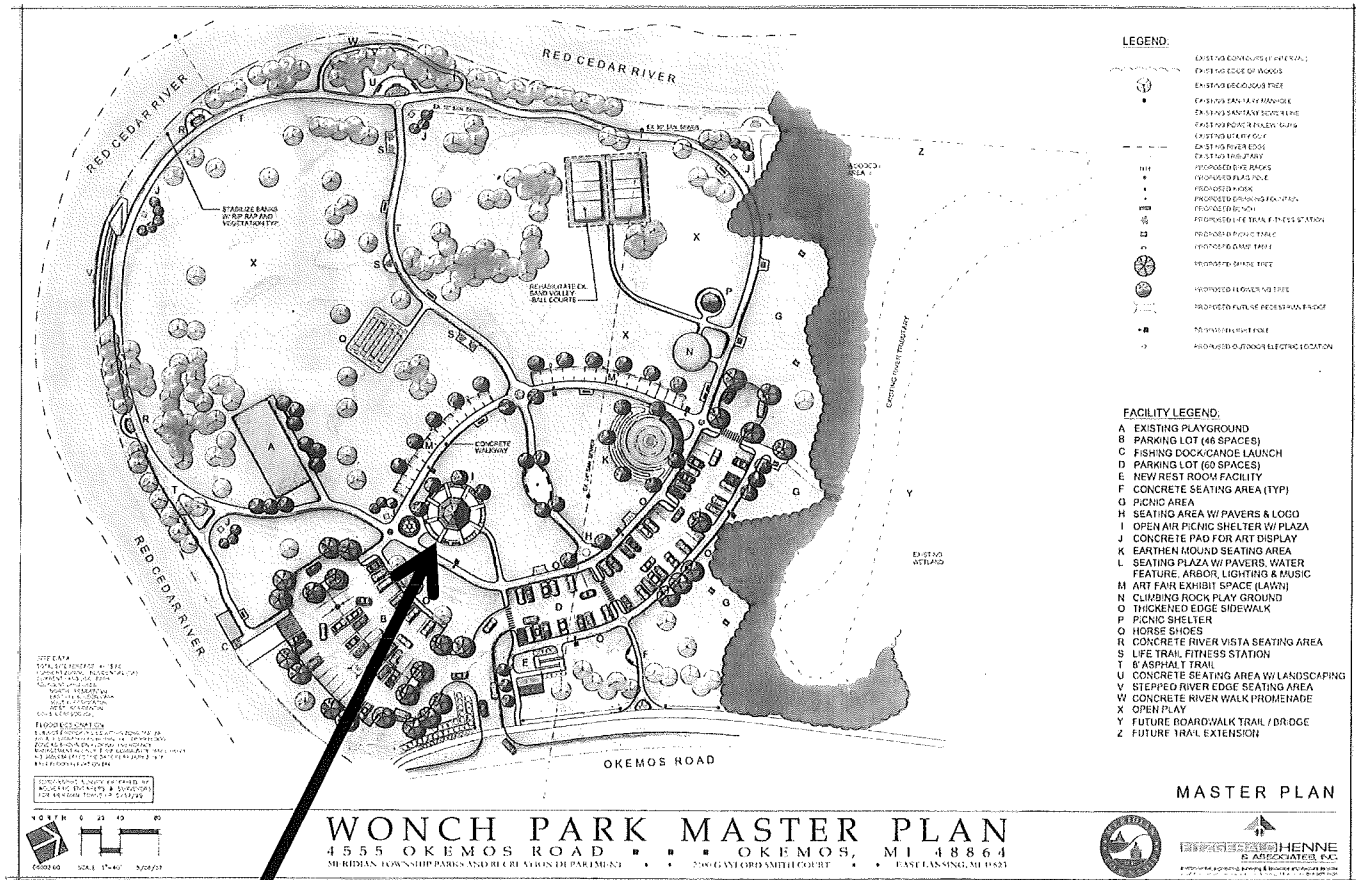
PUBLIC HEARING PROCEDURE

- a) Chair declares public hearing open
- b) Staff presents project overview
- c) Staff acknowledge received items of communications
- d) Public comment
- e) Commissioners comment
- f) Chair declares public hearing closed

Wonch Park Master Plan

MNRTF Grant Submission – New Pavilion & Amenities

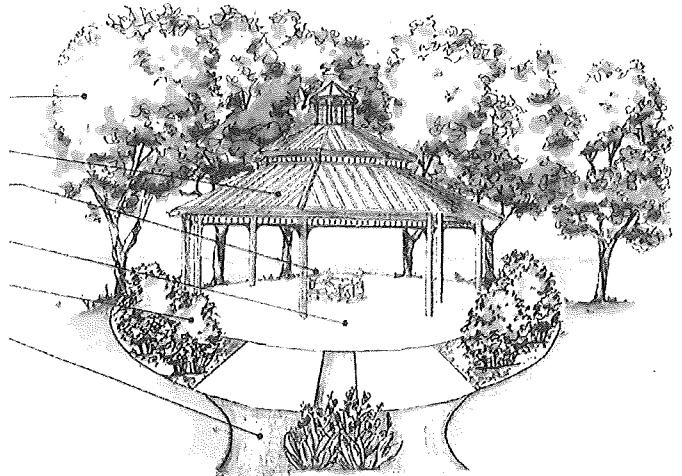
March 11, 2014



New pavilion

Summary

- Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund Development Grant
- Grant request includes a new pavilion, four shade trees, electricity, water, two universally accessible grills and three handicapped accessible picnic tables.
- Estimated project cost is \$250,000 with a Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund (MNRTF) fund request of 75% (\$187,500) and a local match from the General Fund of 25% (\$62,500)
- Grant results will be announced in December 2014



OPEN AIR PICNIC PAVILION

Meridian Township Park Commission
5151 Marsh Road
Okemos, MI 48864

RE: Support for the Wonch Park Grant Proposal

Dear Park Commissioners:

I am writing to support the submission of a grant application to the Department of Natural Resources for construction of a new pavilion and associated amenities in Wonch Park.

Ingham County Parks partners with Meridian Township as the Lake Lansing North and South Parks are located within the Township. Many of the visitors to our facilities also take advantage of the wonderful parks and natural areas offered through the Meridian Township Park System.

Partnerships and regional cooperation such as this improves the quality of life and variety of opportunities available to the residents and visitors to this area of the Tri-County Region.

The addition of a new pavilion and its amenities will be a welcome feature along with the paved loop trail scheduled for construction in spring 2014.

If you have any questions, I may be reached at 517-676-2233

Sincerely,



Willis Bennett
Director

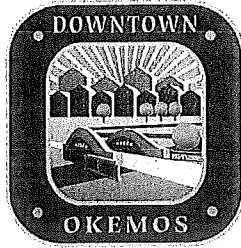


Ingham County Parks & Recreation Department

121 E. Maple St., PO Box 178, Mason, MI 48854
Phone: (517) 676-2233 Fax: (517) 244-7190
www.inghamcountyparks.org email: parks@ingham.org

Meridian Township

Brian G. Dale Chair
Sherry Fisher Vice-Chair
James Raynak Treasurer
Elizabeth LeGoff Supervisor
Bill Cawood Member



Pat Hagen Member
Reneé Korrey Member
Dr. Kerry Lewis Member
Jim Spanos Member
Scott Weaver Member

DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

February 25, 2014

Park Commission
Charter Township of Meridian
5151 Marsh Road
Okemos, MI 48864

Re: Wonch Park Development Grant Application

Dear Park Commission Members,

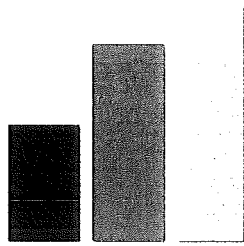
The Board of the Meridian Township Downtown Development Authority supports the submission of a grant application to the Department of Natural Resources for improvements in Wonch Park. The proposed improvements are consistent with the Downtown Development Authority's mission statement to promote and improve the quality of life by creating a friendly, walkable community that embraces the natural aesthetics of the river and parks. Since 2009 Wonch Park improvements have been shown as part of the Downtown Development Authority's Integrated Plan for the Okemos downtown area. The improvements in Wonch Park will be a welcome addition to the downtown area.

If you have any questions please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Brian G. Dale
Chairperson

"The Meridian Township DDA mission is to beautify and revitalize downtown Okemos as a very desirable place to shop, live, and do business. It is a commitment to promoting and improved quality of life by creating a friendly, walkable community embracing the natural aesthetics of the river and parks."



Serving Haslett • Okemos • East Lansing

MERIDIAN

Economic Development Corporation

March 5, 2014

Park Commission
Charter Township of Meridian
5151 Marsh Road
Okemos, MI 48864

Re: Wonch Park Grant Application

Dear Park Commission Members,

I am pleased to support the Department of Natural Resources Grant sought by Meridian Township for the construction of a new pavilion with electricity and water and accessible grills and picnic tables in Wonch Park. On behalf of the Meridian Economic Development Corporation (MEDC), we support the Park Commission's efforts to expose residents to outdoor recreational opportunities, promote tourism, economic development and increase property values.

Best practices in cultural economic development suggest that enhancements to downtown districts bring together quality development and integration of public space amenities will enhance walkability and connection between land uses especially in the downtown Okemos area. Assistance from this grant program offers Meridian Township the opportunity to benefit from quality of life outcomes.

The MEDC is committed to the economic development efforts already in place within Meridian Township such as the Meridian Area Resource Center and the streetscape enhancement project for Okemos Road. Funding assistance from the Department of Natural Resources Trust Fund will significantly increase the Township's ability to provide its citizens, businesses and visitors a sense of place making and the highest quality public spaces improvements to remain competitive in today's economy.

Thank you for your serious and thoughtful consideration in funding this important project to the downtown area of Meridian Township's Downtown Development Authority.

Sincerely,

Marsha Madle

Marsha Madle
Chairperson

Park Commission Meeting
March 11, 2014

7. MINUTES

- a. March 11, 2014 Work Session Minutes
- b. March 11, 2014 Regular Meeting Minutes

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN
PARK COMMISSION WORK SESSION MINUTES
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 2014

PRESENT: Commissioners: Aronoff, Banas, Jaramillo, Stephens, Wilson
Staff: Parks and Recreation Director LuAnn Maisner; Parks & Recreation
Administrative Assistant II Robin Faust

ABSENT: None

1. Call Meeting to Order

Chair Wilson called the meeting to order at 6:02 pm.

2. Roll Call

Chair Wilson called roll and the following members were present: Teri Banas, Marilyn Aronoff, Melanie Jaramillo, Mark Stephens, Todd Wilson

3. Approval of Agenda

Director Maisner asked to remove item #11 – New Business, #b – Support – HNC Foundation Play Area Grant because additional information is needed to complete the grant application.

4. Wonch Park Pavilion – Grant Request MNRTF

At the February 4 Special Meeting, the Park Commissioners discussed and evaluated possible projects for grant consideration. By consensus, they agreed to continue with implementation of the Wonch Park Master Plan by requesting funding assistance for a new pavilion. Staff will prepare the application that is due April 1, 2014. Director Maisner suggested that the Park Commission hold the public hearing to obtain feedback from residents during the March 11, 2014 meeting. The Commission will also have the opportunity to pass a resolution of support for grant submission during that same meeting. If approved, the Township Board will take action on the resolution at their March 18 regular meeting. A motion to schedule a public hearing on March 11, 2014 has been drafted for consideration during the regular meeting.

5. 2013 Park Volunteer List

The Commissioners reviewed the draft 2013 Park Volunteer List. Haslett Lego Club was changed to the Haslett Robotics Club. After careful review and discussion of deserving volunteers, it was the consensus of the Commission to choose Kelly Colflesh as the 2013 Park Friend of the Year. This selection will be formally announced during the Friends of the Parks Volunteer Recognition Ceremony in May.

6. Capital Improvement Projects (CIP)

Director Maisner summarized the discussion from the February 4th special meeting and the draft 2014-2019 CIP documents. The Commissioners discussed:

- Top five priorities (it was noted the vote numbers listed in the minutes were inaccurate and were corrected)
- With current funding, the CIP has been more of a wish list than a budgetary planning tool.
- Projects are listed because interest and need has been expressed by residents
- Asked for what the General Fund is responsible. The Township's General Fund is currently responsible for all improvements and maintenance to General Fund Parks (pre-1984). The proposed millage language states that the new park millage will be responsible for development of all parks and maintenance of current Millage Parks. The General Fund will continue to fund maintenance of General Fund Parks.

7. 2014 Park Millage Ballot Proposal

Director Maisner summarized the information on the 2014 proposed millage for park improvements, renovation, maintenance and operations in the meeting packet. Information was gathered from the 5-Year Parks and Recreation Master Plan, Capital Improvements Program and from how the parks system operated under the current millage. The absentee ballots go out in July.

Discussion:

- Express how the proposed millage will make a difference to our parks
- Clarify what to say in presentations service groups and other organizations
- Need to clarify the message
- Absentee ballots are mailed July 1.
- Commissioners may receive a call from Dawn Parker who is working on a story about the Millage for the Towne Courier.

8. Other

None

9. Public Comment

None

10. Adjournment

Hearing no objections, Chair Wilson adjourned the meeting at 7:05 pm.

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN
PARK COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 2014

PRESENT: Commissioners: Aronoff, Banas, Jaramillo, Stephens, Wilson
Staff: Parks and Recreation Director LuAnn Maisner; Parks & Recreation
Administrative Assistant II Robin Faust

ABSENT: None

1. Call Meeting to Order

Chair Wilson called the meeting to order at 7:10 pm.

2. Roll Call

Chair Wilson called the roll and the following members were present: Marilyn Aronoff, Teri Banas, Melanie Jaramillo, Mark Stephens and Todd Wilson.

3. Approval of Agenda

Remove New Business #11b, Support – HNC Foundation Play Area Grant. This item will be on the next meeting agenda.

COMMISSIONER JARAMILLO MOVED, COMMISSIONER ARONOFF
SECONDED, TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS AMENDED. Voice vote. Motion
passed.

4. Public Comment

None

5. Presentations

None

6. Commissioner Reports and Comments

Chair Wilson stated he attended the Winter Wonderland event at the Harris Nature Center that was attended by over 480 visitors and heard the silent auction was a success.

7. Approval of Minutes

- a. January 14, 2014 Work Session Meeting Minutes – no correction
- b. January 14, 2014 Regular Meeting Minutes – page 6, change spelling to “Crego Park”

- c. February 4, 2014 Special Meeting Minutes – page 2, item #4, correct totals under 2014 General Fund to \$232,500 and Grant to \$342,500; page 2, item #5, change votes to: Towner Road Park – 5 votes; Central Park redevelopment – 5 votes; Legg park development – 4 votes; Playground improvements for all parks – 3 votes.

COMMISSIONER JARAMILLO MOVED, COMMISSIONER ARONOFF SECONDED TO APPROVE THE JANUARY 14, 2014 WORK SESSION MINUTES AS PRESENTED AND THE JANUARY 14, 2014 REGULAR MEETING AND FEBRUARY 4, 2014 SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES AS CORRECTED. Voice vote. Motion passed.

8. Communications

A. Items to/from the Public

1. To: Clerk Dreyfus; RE: 2014 Park Commission Chair/Vice Chair Election Results
2. To: Planning Commission; RE: Special Use Permit #13171 (Aldi/Eyde)
3. To: Residents; RE: Land Preservation Advisory Board allowing bicycle access through Red Cedar Glen Land Preserve
4. To: Jane Greenway; From: Julie Johnston, Michigan Search and Rescue; RE: dog training in Central Park South

B. Commission Information

1. February Calendar of Events for Parks & Recreation
2. Parks & Recreation Department Monthly Report – January
3. Towne Courier: **Dec 8:** Terrific tree planting sustains land preserve; Drive Thru Santa; **Jan 2:** Historic bridge renewal; **Jan 26:** Family Winter Sports events this weekend, Meridian Farmers Winter Market, Meridian's deer harvest grows nearly 30 percent, Chipmunk Story Time at HNC at Feb 13, Chinese New Year celebration Feb 1
4. Kids' World News – January 2013 issues; Meridian Township Parks & Recreation Family Winter Sports Weekend
5. 2013 Park Accomplishments

C. Staff Inquiries/Response – None

Director Maisner distributed a copy of the Parks and Recreation Department's portion of the Township's Annual Report to the Commissioners.

COMMISSIONER ARONOFF MOVED, COMMISSIONER JARAMILLO SECONDED, TO ACCEPT AND PLACE THE ITEMS OF COMMUNICATION ON FILE. Voice vote. Motion passed.

9. Director's Report

Van Atta Road Bridge Replacement – Van Atta Road is closed now through June. Access to the Nature Center is from the south from Jolly Road. With the

new bridge construction, there will also be the construction of a canoe landing adjacent to the Harris Nature fire pit area.

Projects we are working on include:

- **Legg Park:** working on entry drive paving project
- **Newton Road Park:** working with Planning Department on the parking lot construction; construct in the spring
- **Wonch Park:** Township was awarded a MNRTF Grant to construct a paved loop trail; working on construction plans with Engineering Department; plan to construct this summer.
- **Maps:** Staff is working on updating park trail maps and including them on the Pedestrian/Bicycle Pathway Master Plan. The end goal is to create a user friendly/interactive map app for smart phones.
- **Family Fun Guide:** This next issue will cover programs and activities from March through December 2014. The following issue will become an annual publication coming out in January 2015. We plan to make greater use of target marketing, social media and utilize other Township communication resources as part of an effective marketing plan. The Family Fun Guide has become just as much a Township Resource Guide and a Parks and Recreation promotional brochure. This annual publication will continue to have a chronological listing of programs and events for easy reference and can be utilized by real estate companies in marketing our community.
- **Wonch Park:** writing a grant application for construction a new pavilion. The project cost is \$250,000 with a local commitment of \$62,500. The project will consist of a pavilion, handicap accessible tables, grills and shade trees. The application is due April 1.
- **Annual Report:** Staff just completed the department's portion of the 2013 annual report and a copy was distributed to the Commissioners. The Township's annual report will be available later this month. Director Maisner reported new this year was the inclusion of the "economic impact" of youth and adult sports in our community. This information was derived from survey responses on additional recreation spending from program participants. A total of 3,005 youth and adult sports participants created and estimated \$310,493 of additional commerce in our community in 2013. The 737 Williamston participants spent an additional \$126,095 on things such as equipment, gas, food and pre and post-game activities. There is also a list of all partnering individuals, groups, organizations and businesses who contributed to many successful programs and events in 2013. Also noted are the total number of volunteers in our parks and recreation programs last year. A total of 1,052 people volunteered 33,983 hours which had a value of \$701,069. Many thanks to our volunteers.
- **Ski and Snow Shoe Rental** is available at the Harris Nature Center during the day and weekend
- **Family Winter Sports Weekend Recap:**
 - 480 attended 15th Annual Winter Wonderland at Harris Nature Center
 - 60 attended Family Moonlight Sledding
 - 160 attended Meridian Bowls
 - 100 attended Meridian Swims

198 participated in the 7th Annual Polar Bear 5K Run/Walk
92 attended Meridian Target Practice Opportunities at Demmer Center

1,090 participants were engaged in recreation over the weekend

Curling at Central Park South was canceled due to the extreme cold.

No indoor ice skating this year due to availability

- **Joint Meeting:** Tuesday, February 18, 2014 at 6 p.m.
- **February 15:**
 - ✓ Farmers' Market at Meridian Mall; 10 am – 2 pm
 - ✓ Ice Fishing Derby at Central Park South Pond; 9 am-noon; kids free awards dicks sporting goods and Family Moonlight Sledding
 - ✓ Family Moonlight Sledding at North Meridian Road Park; 6-8:30 pm
- **February 28:**
 - ✓ Snowman/Snow Sculpture Contest Deadline; entries have been posted on facebook
 - ✓ Condolences to Senior Park Naturalist Kit Rich on the passing of her father
 - ✓ Administrative Assistant Robin Faust's birthday is on Valentine's Day

10. Unfinished Business

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

11. New Business

PUBLIC COMMENT

a. **Wonch Park Grant** – Set Public Hearing Date

Director Maisner stated

- The grant will include the following proposed improvements: New pavilion, 4- deciduous trees, electricity, water, and 2- universally accessible grills and 3-handicapped accessible picnic tables
- Estimated Project Cost: \$250,000
- Local Match from General Fund 25% \$62,500
- Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund (MNRTF) request 75% \$187,500
- March 11, 2014 – Hold Public Hearing
- March 11, 2014 – Park Commission may take action on resolution of support for the grant application
- March 18, 2014 – Township Board action for grant submission
- April 1, 2014 - Application Deadline
- The Township was awarded the paved loop trail for this site and construction is proposed to begin this summer
- The original pavilion was constructed by the Okemos/Haslett Kiwanis Club in 1979 and picnic participants have asked for electricity, water and better access to the pavilion
- A notice of public hearing will appear in the Towne Courier and letters will be sent to Wonch Park neighbors

COMMISSIONER STEPHENS MOVED, COMMISSIONER JARAMILLO SECONDED TO SCHEDULE A PUBLIC HEARING ON TUESDAY, MARCH 11, 2014 TO SOLICIT PUBLIC INPUT ON THE SUBMISSION OF A GRANT TO THE MICHIGAN NATURAL RESOURCES TRUST FUND FOR IMPROVEMENTS TO WONCH PARK WHICH INCLUDES A PAVILION, UTILITIES, UNIVERSALLY ACCESSIBLE GRILLS AND PICNIC TABLES.

Roll Call:

AYES: Melanie Jaramillo, Todd Wilson, Teri Banas, Marilyn Aronoff, Mark Stephens

NAYS: None

Motion passed

b. Support – HNC Foundation Play Area Grant

This item deleted from agenda.

c. ICDC Controlled Burn Request – Towar Park Rain Gardens

Director Maisner reported the Ingham County Drain Commissioners Office is requesting once again to conduct a controlled burn in the rain gardens in Towar Park. Controlled burning in those areas has been done on an annual basis since 2010. They are proposing the same program once again. They work in conjunction with our Fire Department and a licensed contractor who performed the burn last year and will be notifying residents.

CHAIR WILSON MOVED, COMMISSIONER JARAMILLO SECONDED, TO APPROVE THE REQUEST FROM THE INGHAM COUNTY DRAIN COMMISSIONERS OFFICE TO CONDUCT CONTROLLED BURNING IN THE RAIN GARDENS NEAR SNELL-TOWAR RECREATION CENTER AS AN EFFECTIVE WEED CONTROL MEASURE IN 2014. THE ICDC IS RESPONSIBLE FOR OBTAINING REQUIRED PERMITS AND FOR FOLLOWING STANDARD SAFETY MEASURES AND WILL INFORM THE PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT OF THE EXACT DATE AND TIME OF THE PROPOSED ACTIVITY. Voice vote. Motion passed.

Commissioners asked to be notified of the burn date.

12. Other Business

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

13. Discussion Items

PUBLIC COMMENT

a. Park Millage Ballot Proposal

Director Maisner offered the following history and summary of the Park Millage Ballot proposal:

- Residents currently pay a .317 millage to support the Meridian Township Park System. This amount has not increased since the millage was first supported by voters in 1984.
- The Park system has grown from 325 acres in 1984 to 904 acres today.
- On April 16, 2013, the Meridian Township Board unanimously approved placing a ballot proposal before voters on August 5, 2014 requesting a new park millage consisting of **2/3rds mill (\$0.6667 on each \$1000 of taxable value)** to fund activities that maintain and enhance community parks.
- **August 5, 2014 general election ballot** It would raise approximately \$1,042,000 to support necessary park improvements, renovation projects, maintenance, and operations
- The proposed millage would be levied for a period of twelve **(12) years, 2014 through 2025 inclusive**
- If approved, the owner of a home with a taxable **value of \$100,000 would pay \$66.67 per year** in property taxes for the next twelve (12) years.
- If approved, the existing .317 park millage would sunset in 2016 and not be requested for renewal.
- A total of over \$8,000,000 of park projects and improvements have been identified in the Capital Improvements and other necessary repairs.
- If approved, an estimated \$6,000,000 will be available for park development and improvement projects in the next twelve years.
- Planning and research is included in the 5-Year Parks and Recreation Master Plan and Capital Improvements Program.

Commissioner Stephens asked for volunteers to assist with the Park Millage Campaign. There are over 900 acres we are trying to manage with the same millage amount since 1984.

Commissioner Aronoff stated additional information on the proposal will be forthcoming and Commissioners will be visiting with the local organizations and community groups. The Commissioners will be asking for your support for this millage proposal and to join us in this campaign.

Director Maisner stated all of the research will be on the website. The Township will still be looking to leverage the Park Millage dollars through volunteers, donations and grants. Community engagement is important and this is a modest request.

Chair Wilson stated this request is not only for development but to also supplement ongoing and future maintenance issues. Our park system has grown since the last millage renewal with additional facilities and amenities that need attention. The Commission and staff have kept mindful of what is existing along with adding new as needed.

Commissioner Stephens stated this is a good investment of an additional \$67 per household in the Township and when supporting parks you are expanding your own "backyard".

14. Final Comments

Commissioner Stephens stated he attended the Ingham County Parks meeting where they awarded John Hessey with their Volunteer of the Year award. Mr. Hessey developed and runs the Dr. Bill Earl program in Ingham County Parks and is a member of the Mid-Michigan Salmon and Steelhead Fisherman's Program.

15. Announcements

- a. Next Regular Meeting Date: Tuesday, March 11, 2014 Town Hall
- b. Joint Meeting of the Boards and Commissions Date: Tuesday, February 18, 2014, 6 pm, Town Hall
- c. Farmers' Market – J C Penney Corridor of Meridian Mall, Saturday, February 15 and March 1 from 10 am-2 pm
- d. Van Atta Road Closed from Grand River south to bridge, February 5 – May
- e. Ice Fishing Derby – Central Park Pond; 9 am – noon; Free for children
- f. Moonlight Sledding – North Meridian Road Park; 6 - 8:30 pm; Free
- g. Snow Sculpture/Snowman contest deadline is February 28
- h. Successful Winter Kickball Tournament on February 8 in Nancy Moore Park

16. Public Remarks

None

17. Closed Session

None

18. Adjournment

COMMISSIONER JARAMILLO MOVED, COMMISSIONER STEPHENS
SECONDED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING.

The meeting adjourned at 7:48 pm.

Park Commission Meeting

MARCH 11, 2014

8. COMMUNICATIONS

- A. Items to/from the Public
 - 1. To: Michigan Recreation and Park Association, RE: Kelly Colflesh to receive MRPA Community Service Award at ceremony on March 19
- B. Commission Information
 - 1. March Calendar of Events for Parks & Recreation
 - 2. Parks & Recreation Department Monthly Report – February
 - 3. Towne Courier: **Feb 9:** Meridian Ice Fishing Derby set for Feb 15; Winter Farmers Market; **Feb 16:** Vulture program at HNC March 7; \$6M park revamp plan envisioned
 - 4. Kids' World News – February 14 issues; Meridian Township Parks & Recreation Family Winter Sports Weekend
 - 5. Lansing State Journal: **Feb 15:** Investing in Parks; **Feb 16:** Kids get chance to try their hand at ice fishing;
 - 6. LSJ Website: **Feb 15:** Investing in Parks; **Feb 17:** Meridian Township plans \$6M overhaul of parks; Lansing-area kids try their hand at ice fishing
 - 7. OkemosToday.com: **Feb 28:** Park Commission pushes for new millage
 - 8. Okemos Life Magazine: February issue
- C. Staff Inquiries/Response



March 3, 2014

LuAnn Maisner
Director of Parks & Recreation
Meridian Township Parks and Recreation
2100 Gaylord C. Smith Court
Haslett, MI 48840

Dear LuAnn,

Congratulations on behalf of the Michigan Recreation and Park Association (MRPA) and the Awards Committee! We are pleased to inform you that your nomination for a Community Service Award honoring **Kelly Colflesh** was selected as a winner this year.

The award will be presented at the MRPA Community Service Award Ceremony on Wednesday, March 19, 2014 at the Hannah Community Center in East Lansing. A hors d'oeuvres reception will be held from 5:45 pm – 6:30 pm, with the award ceremony immediately following.

Please contact your nominee to notify them and complete the RSVP form. The event is priced at \$25 per person; MRPA will issue an invoice to you if requested. Please complete the enclosed RSVP form and return it to MRPA at your earliest convenience. MRPA will send you a confirmation via e-mail once the RSVP is received. Please note: no tickets will be issued this year, just a roster at the door will be used. A map and driving directions are also enclosed with this letter.

Procedures during the ceremony are as follows: When your nominee's name and award are announced, please walk to the podium with your winner and everyone in your group. If special assistance is needed, please contact me as soon as possible. Unfortunately, our schedule does not allow time for acceptance speeches. After the award is presented, a photo will be taken and will be e-mailed to each nominating organization.

MRPA wants this award experience to be memorable for you and your honoree. If you need more information or assistance, please contact me at (517) 319-6940 or e-mail me at wlongpr@cityofeastlansing.com

We are proud to honor the volunteers and agencies that create community throughout the state of Michigan and we applaud your commitment to recreation and park services and MRPA.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Wendy Wilmers Longpre".

Wendy Wilmers Longpre
MRPA Awards Chair



COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARDS

2014 RSVP FORM (please return to MRPA)

Nominator Name _____

Award Winner name(s) _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Please list the names in your party:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

YES, we will be attending the MRPA Community Service Award ceremony at the Hannah Community Center on Wednesday, March 19, 2014.

The reception begins at 5:45pm and the awards program begins at 6:30pm

Our group needs _____ reservations @ \$25.00 per person

Payment is enclosed

Please send an invoice

We will NOT be attending the MRPA Community Service Award ceremony

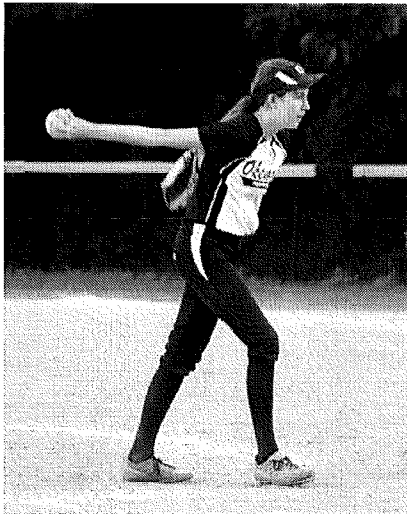
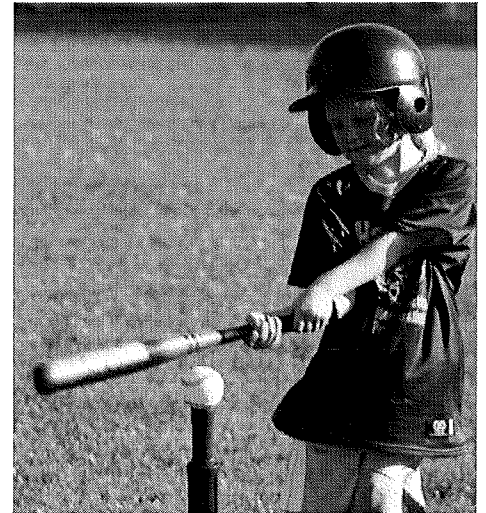
Please make checks payable and return this form to:

MRPA
2465 Woodlake Circle, Suite 180
Okemos, MI 48864
Phone: (517)485-9888 Fax: (517)485-7932

Meridian Township Parks & Recreation

March Calendar of Events

- March 1 – First Class Dog Training: Dog Obedience
- March 1 – Winter Farmers' Market in Meridian Mall
- March 1 – First Class Dog Training: Puppy Obedience
- March 3 – First Class Dog Training: Dog Obedience
- March 4 – Sporties for Shorties at the MAC
- March 7 – Haslett DK & K Grade Boys and Girls T-Ball League registration deadline
- March 7 – Haslett 1st – 8th Grade Boys Baseball League registration deadline
- March 7 – Haslett 1st – 4th Grade Girls Softball League registration deadline
- March 7 – Okemos 1st – 8th Grade Boys Baseball League registration deadline



- March 7 – Okemos 1st – 8th Grade Girls Softball League registration deadline
- March 7 – Weekday Science Programs: Vulture Culture
- March 9 – Family Special: Herons are Here
- March 14 – Howl at the Moon
- March 15 – 3rd – 8th Grade Softball Pitching Clinic registration deadline
- March 15 – HNC Stewardship Mornings
- March 15 – Winter Farmers' Market in Meridian Mall
- March 18 – Gardening with Native Plants
- March 20 – Chipmunk Story Time: In My Backyard
- March 22 – Introduction to Nordic Walking

- March 22 – Maple Moon Campfire
- March 23 – FHM Lecture Series
- March 30 – Song Bird Nest Box Workshop



Questions, call Meridian Township
Parks & Recreation
at (517) 853-4600



PARKS & RECREATION

1. Park Commission

At their February 11 meeting, the Park Commission:

At their January 14 work session, the Park Commission received an update from the Park Millage Work Group on the Park Millage Renewal; set a special meeting to review the Commission's goals and objectives for 2014 and Grant Applications for 2014 and discussed the naming policy.

At the regular meeting on January 14, they received three presentations: 1) shade trees in parks from David Fisher; 2) Eastgate Park/ Red Cedar River log jam removal from the Ingham County Drain Commissioner and 3) Ember Oaks Drain Restoration project through Legg Park and the Red Cedar Glen Natural Area from the Ingham County Drain Commissioner; Mark Stephens was appointed the representative to the Land Preservation Advisory Board; plan revisions and Park Commission concerns on Special Use Permit #13171 (Aldi/Eyde) development and the 2013 Friends of the Park Volunteer Recognition ceremony.

The next regular meeting of the Park Commission is scheduled for Tuesday, March 11, 2014 in the Town Hall Room at the Meridian Municipal Building, 5151 Marsh Road, Okemos. The work session is scheduled for 6 pm and the regular televised meeting will begin at 7 pm.

2. Administration:

Attended meetings with planning committee for 2014 Celebrate Downtown Okemos event scheduled for Saturday, June 14.

In final developing and editing stage for the 2014 Family Fun Guide. This edition will contain events and activities through the end of the year. Planned distribution date is early March.

3. Parks and Land Management

Land Preservation:

- LPAB Monthly Meeting: The LPAB met on February 12, 2014 at 6 pm at the Meridian Service Center in Nancy Moore Park. The board elected Jim Kielbaso as the Chair and Jon Mayes as the Vice-Chair for 2014.
- The next regular LPAB meeting will be held on Wednesday, April 9, 2014 at 6 pm. Location to be determined.
- Prescribed Burns: Planned for prescribed burn on 30 acres of Lake Lansing North Park (in the 120-acre portion that is under a Meridian Township conservation easement). Planned for a prescribed burn on 28 acres of the Davis/Foster Land Preserve.
- Researched the State endangered, Henslow's sparrow habitat requirements, species management techniques and contacted the DNR for recommendations, permit information and legal obligations associated with hosting an endangered species population. Henslow's sparrow was identified on the Davis Foster Land Preserve in 2013.

- Began the 2014 DEQ Aquatic Nuisance Permit Application process for the treatment of invasive species; Phragmites and Japanese Knotweed within the township wetlands
- Developed interpretive sign for Sower Woods Land Preserve
- Future Land Acquisitions: Continued to solicit bids for an appraisal of a property that the LPAB is considering for acquisition

Parks:

- Attended Healthy Parks meeting at East Lansing's Hannah Center
- Met with township staff to develop a process for creating new trail maps for the parks
- Began to develop Water Trail map for Meridian Township
- Worked on Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund grant application for a pavilion at Wonch Park
- Obtained bids for prescribed burns at Central Park South and Historical Village

4. Recreation

February First Class Dog Training Classes – 6 participants

2,000 +attended the Chinese New Year Event on February 1 in the Meridian Mall

75 attended the Meridian Fishing Derby on February 15

200+ attended the Family Moonlight Sledding event on February 15

60 Seniors continue to participate in the 50-plus Workout program in the Meridian Mall every Monday, Wednesday and Friday. We hosted a holiday party for them following class on December 13. These seniors are a real inspiration! The oldest participant is 99 years old!

Currently taking registration forms for:

- Okemos K-8th grade soccer
- Haslett DK-K grade Tall
- Haslett 1st-8th grade baseball
- Haslett 1-4th grade softball
- Okemos 1st – 8th grade baseball
- Okemos 1st – 8th softball

Two indoor market days were held with 30+ vendors at each. The Farmers' Market will continue through April.

March Calendar of Events

March 1 – First Class Dog Training: Dog Obedience

March 1 – Winter Farmers' Market in Meridian Mall

March 1 – First Class Dog Training: Puppy Obedience

March 3 – First Class Dog Training: Dog Obedience

March 4 – Sporties for Shorties at the MAC

March 7 – Haslett DK & K Grade Boys and Girls T-Ball League registration deadline

March 7 – Haslett 1st – 8th Grade Boys Baseball League registration deadline
March 7 – Haslett 1st – 4th Grade Girls Softball League registration deadline
March 7 – Okemos 1st – 8th Grade Boys Baseball League registration deadline
March 7 – Okemos 1st – 8th Grade Girls Softball League registration deadline
March 7 – Weekday Science Programs: Vulture Culture
March 9 – Family Special: Herons are Here
March 14 – Howl at the Moon
March 15 – 3rd – 8th Grade Softball Pitching Clinic registration deadline
March 15 – HNC Stewardship Mornings
March 15 – Winter Farmers' Market in Meridian Mall
March 18 – Gardening with Native Plants
March 20 – Chipmunk Story Time: In My Backyard
March 22 – Introduction to Nordic Walking
March 22 – Maple Moon Campfire
March 23 – FHM Lecture Series
March 30 – Song Bird Nest Box Workshop

5. **Snell-Towar Recreation Center**

Senior Luncheon: The February 6th luncheon had 8 people in attendance the next luncheon is scheduled for March 12th.

On February 18th staff took 10 "Towar Teens" on a ski trip to Caberfae Peaks in Cadillac funded through a grant from the Capital Region Community Foundation.

Staff attended the February 27th meeting of the Edgewood Village Community Outreach Board to talk about the upcoming summer playground program and possible financial support from Edgewood Village for it.

6. **Harris Nature Center**

Attendance: January and February 2014:

879 drop-in visitors to the Nature Building
79 students learned about nature in winter (5 programs)
33 children attended Weekday Science (2 programs)
283 children and adults received Outreach Programs (6 programs)
11 toddlers/preschoolers are enrolled in the 6-week Nature Classes
9 children participated in Chipmunk Story Time
25 children enjoyed 2 Birthday Parties
19 adults attended the 3-week Photography Class
15 people participated in the Family Special: Crafternoon
25 people attended Cross Country Ski and Snowshoe Classes
42 people enjoyed Moonlight Ski and Shoe evenings
8 people participated in the Owl Prowl Campfire and Program
18 adults attended Howl at the Moon guided walks
480 people enjoyed Winter Wonderland
15 people rented/used the building for 2 meetings

Naturalist Staff Notes:

- Staff taught 32 programs.
- Staff sent out 30 press releases on upcoming HNC programs.

- All spring programs and summer day camp are posted on the Township web site
- All 2014 programs are open for enrollment on ActiveNet
- HNC Facebook summary through 2-28-14:

• Total Likes	• 759
• Highest Reach	• 830

- Staff was interviewed about upcoming programs on:
 - WLNZ radio: Coffee Break Show
 - Midwest Radio Group (WLMI, WQTX, WVIC, WJXQ)
 - WKAR radio: Current State
 - WILX/WXLA radio: The Mid-Michigan Pet Expert Show
 - HOM-TV: Coffee Break Show
 - HOM-TV: 3 interviews
- Staff prepared and emailed the winter HNC newsletter
- Staff attended a Butterfly Monitoring facilitators meeting.
- The exterior of the circular display case in the exhibit area has been painted by local artist Carolyn Damstra to look like a tree trunk with several animals sitting on it.
- The Van Atta Road Bridge has been demolished and a new bridge will be built over the next few months. Therefore you must access HNC from Jolly Road.
- All nature trails are open from dawn to dusk for walking. The nature building is open Tuesday-Saturday, 9am-4pm and Sunday 12pm-4 pm. There is a porta-john available when the building is closed.

Upcoming Programs:

Family Special: Herons are Here, Sunday March 9 at 3 pm; symbol of the wetlands the Great Blue Herons will soon return with a promise of spring. Learn about this bird and it's cousins through nature activities and a walk. (\$3/person or \$7/family)

Howl at the Moon, Friday March 14 at 7:30 pm; guided night walk under the full moon; dogs welcome on a leash. Meet in the parking lot. (\$3/person)

Stewardship Mornings: It's always Earth Day! Saturday March 15 at 9-11 am; help keep our park and trails healthy and safe through removal of invasive plants, maintaining habitat areas and gardening around the building. Volunteer once or become a regular once each month (no fee)

Landscaping with Native Plants, Tuesday March 18 at 7 pm; learn about using native plants in your gardens from experts Vern and Sue Stephens (\$15/person)

Chipmunk Story Time, "In My Backyard" Thursday March 20 at 10 am; preschool and elementary children join Chicory and Hickory Chipmunk for nature stories followed by a walk, game or craft (\$3/child)

Nordic Walking Class, Saturday March 22 at 9:30 am; Nordic walking is a new outdoor exercise which provides a fun, total body, low impact workout. This class will include time practicing Nordic walking on natural trails and sidewalks. (\$15 with your own poles or \$20 if borrowing poles)

Maple Moon Campfire, Saturday March 22 at 7 pm; maple sugaring program including a tree tapping demonstration, marshmallow roasting and guided walk (\$3/person or \$7/family)

Song Bird Nest Box Workshop, Saturday March 30 at 3 pm; encourage song birds to your yard! Gene Wasserman will show you how and help you build a nest box. The program is free and nest box kits are \$12 for a robin nesting shelf or \$20 for a bluebird box or wren box. Call 349-3866 to let us know how many kits you need.

Preschool Science Explorations: All about Plants, Thursday April 3, at 12:30 pm; preschoolers (4 & 5 year olds) explore science topics through hands-on activities and time outdoors once each month (\$4/child)

Weekday Science, "Fiddleheads and Ferns" Friday April 4 at 1 pm; science enrichment for children 6-14 years old (\$4/child)

Discover Bird Watching, Saturday April 5 at 9-11:30 am; learn to use binoculars, find out simple techniques for identifying common birds and take bird watching walk with a naturalist (\$5/person)

Qigong for Health, Saturday April 5 at 9 am; qigong (pronounced chi gung) is an ancient Chinese exercise practice that conditions the body while quieting the mind. Qigong can be practiced by people of all ages and is enhanced by practicing in nature, so the class will meet outside, weather permitting. (\$40/5-week session or \$10/drop-in class)

Spring Discovery Walk, Sunday April 6 at 3 pm; the birds are nesting and wildflowers blooming- it's a great time to discover nature! HNC is holding this guided interpretive walk in association with the MSU Science Festival. Find out more at www.sciencefestival.msu.edu (free)

7. Meridian Senior Center

- Special events/programs in February
 - a. Tuesday & Thursday Lunches – 25 participants
 - b. AARP Tax Appointments – 71
 - c. MAC class – 4 participants
 - d. Line dance – 7 participants
 - e. Jazzercise – 25 participants
 - f. Chess – 5 participants
 - g. Hand & Foot – 2 participants
 - h. Tai Chi – 9 participants
 - i. Cribbage – 7 participants
 - j. Documentary – 1 participant
 - k. History Club – 1 participant
 - l. Out to Lunch Bunch – 5 participants
 - m. Book Club – 9 participants
 - n. Ask a Lawyer – 2 participants
 - o. Chair Massage – 5 participants
 - p. Tuesday Bridge – 39 participants
 - q. Bingo – 17 participants
 - r. Euchre – 12 participants
 - s. Blood Pressure – 6 participants
 - t. Mah Jongg – 7 participants
 - u. Pinochle – 6 participants
 - v. Computer Club – 3 participants
 - w. PATH class – 8 participants
 - x. Yoga – 3 participants
 - y. Mind Benders – 4 participants
 - z. Big Ideas all ages – 15 participants
 - aa. Current Events 6 participants
 - bb. Table Tennis – 4 participants
 - cc. Foot care – 21 participants
 - dd. MSUFCUf.group – 4 participants
- Professional development/networking:
 - a. Met with Ben Hassenger regarding Ukulele Class on February 4
 - b. Met with Karen Webster, Dobie Road facility regarding sponsorship of B-Day celebrations and Father's Day on February 12
 - c. Attended Baby Boomer Workshop on February 19

- d. Attended Elder Abuse training on February 25
- e. Scheduled to attend the 50+ Expo at LCC East on Tuesday, March 4
- f. Scheduled to attend the Caregiver Retreat at Eagle Eye on Thursday, March 27

8. The Parks and Grounds Maintenance Division

In February, 3 interments, 8 interments to date, 0 disinterment, at Glendale Cemetery

Continued to treat Township sidewalks, parking lots, pathways, parks, for ice and snow plowed as required

Cleared sidewalks between Cliffdale and Haslett Road to Academic Way; and from Piccadilly and Teakwood (code enforcement)

Refilled salt barrels at school cross walks

Assisted staff with site preparations (set up and take down) for Family Moonlight Sledding at North Meridian Road Park

Opened catch basins in Township parking lots before the forecasted rains

Removed tree across road and trail adjacent to Northwest Land Preserve

Cold patched Township parking areas and driveways where possible

Removed trash and restocked dog waste receptacles in 18 Parks and at the Cemetery

Continued with off-road trail maintenance

Hung banners at Town Hall and across Hamilton Road

Assisted building maintenance crew with repairs

Staff attended training sessions for CDL and playground safety inspections

MERIDIAN FARMERS' WINTER MARKET

SATURDAYS, FEBRUARY 1 & 15
10AM - 2PM





MERIDIAN MALL
JCPenney Corridor

Meridian Ice Fishing Derby set for Feb. 15

Meridian Township Parks and Recreation Department is hosting its annual Meridian Ice Fishing Derby for youth ages 5-16 on Saturday, Feb. 15, from 9 a.m.-noon at the Central Park South pond. The event is free.

Volunteers will provide assistance with creating fishing access. Bait and a limited number of poles will be available as well. Prizes will be awarded for the first fish caught, largest fish, second largest fish and smallest fish.

This event is held in conjunction with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) "Free Fishing Weekend" held Feb. 15 and 16. This opportunity allows all residents and visitors to Michigan to fish without a license for two days. Although a license is not required for this weekend, a fishing license is recommended.

The DNR offers two free fishing events each year to encourage outdoor recreation participation.

The Central Park South Pond is located at 1990 Central Park Drive, across the street from the Okemos Post Office.

For more information, visit www.meridian.mi.us or call Greg Grothous at (517) 853-4616, say organizers.

Towne Courier • Sunday, February 16, 2014 • 5

Vulture program at HNC March 7

Enhance your child's science education at the Harris Nature Center, 3998 Van Atta Road, in Meridian Township on Friday, March 7 at 1 p.m. during their Weekday Science program on vultures. The programs are open to children 5-14 years old. For more information, contact (517) 349-3866 or hnc@meridian.mi.us.

Kids' World News February 2014,

Meridian Township Parks & Recreation



Chipmunk Story Time & Other Children's Activities



At Harris Nature Center
Thursday 10 to 11 a.m.
Feb. 13, March 20, April 17

Call 517-349-3866 • www.meridian.mi.us

An edition of the
Lansing State Journal

The TOWNE Courier™

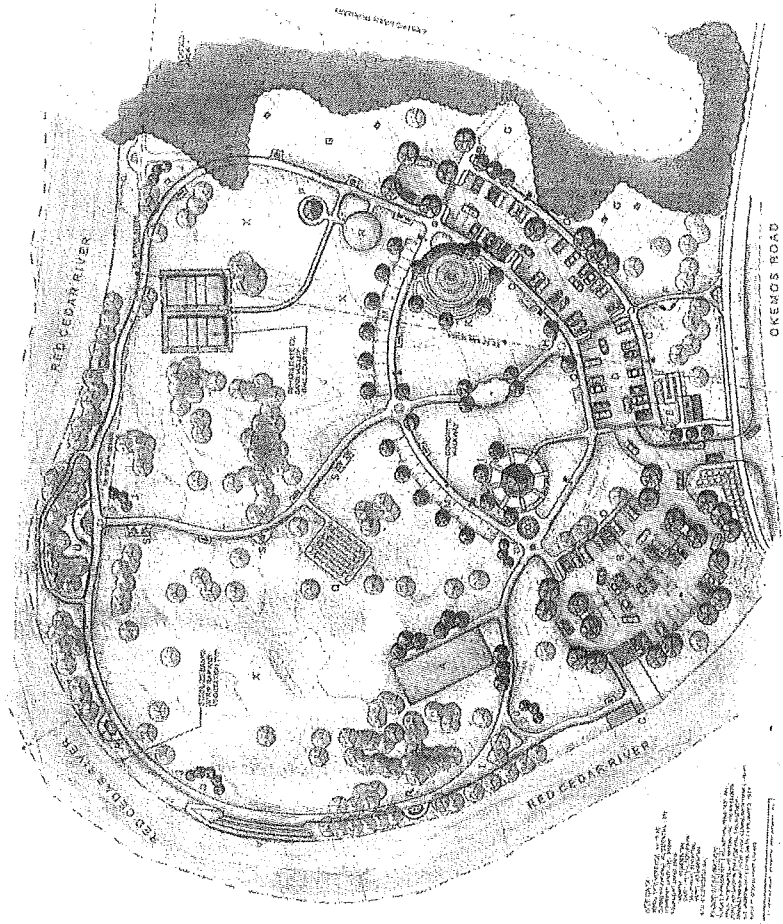
Your very own newspaper serving East Lansing, Okemos, Haslett and Meridian Township

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Vol. 51 — No. 20

www.TowneCourier.com

February 16, 2014



Concert for Wonch Park off Okemos Road. COURTESY ART

\$6M park revamp plan envisioned

Meridian Twp. to seek millage to bring system in line with demands

By Dawn Parker
diparker@lsj.com

MERIDIAN TWP. — A \$6 million revamp of the Meridian Township's popular park system is being envisioned over the next 12 years, using additional tax money parks commission officials hope will be approved by voters in August.

The two-thirds mill, which will be on the ballot Aug. 5, is being sought as a means of supplementing an existing

See **PARK PLAN**, Page 3

Park plan

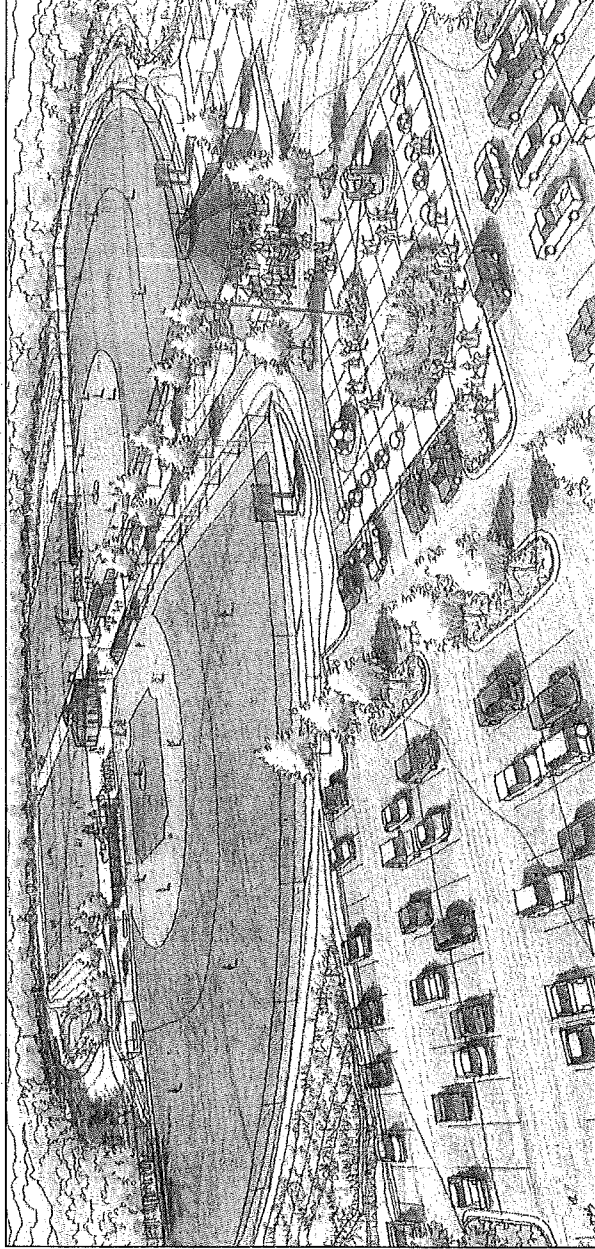
Continued from Page 1

.317 mill, which was originally approved in 1984, mainly for maintenance and operations.

Since then, the park system has nearly tripled in size from 325 acres to more than 900 acres, and residents in several surveys have pointed to the parks as the reason they like living in township, like living in township, LuAnn Maisner, Parks and Recreation Director said.

The new funds would address needs outlined in the parks commission's 2014-2019 Capital Improvement Program, the most of important being the development of the Towner Road Park as a recreation facility to serve residents living in the northern portion of the township.

Located just south of Saginaw Highway, Towner Road Park is "really a top priority" because the park's development would address a lack of recreational facilities in the northern portion of the township, Maisner said. The central and southern sections of the township are served by the Nancy Moore Park and Hulett Park, respec-



Concept for Towner Park in northern part of township. COURTESY ART

PARK PROJECTS

Lump Sum Per Park	
Towner Road Park -	\$2,200,000
Central Park -	\$1,050,000
Legg Park -	\$591,000
Marshall Park -	\$455,000
Wonch Park -	\$700,000
Meridian Riverfront Park -	\$432,000
North Meridian Road Park -	\$172,000
Hillbrook Park -	\$260,000
Harris Nature Center -	\$460,000
Nancy Moore Park -	\$240,000
Newton Road Park -	\$80,000
Orlando Park Trail -	\$138,000
Ottawa Hills Park -	\$50,000
Snell Towar Recreation Center -	\$100,000
Hartrick Park -	\$280,000

The site, acquired in 2007 with the intent of building an athletic complex, is "ready to go. We feel strongly about moving forward," she said.

The \$2.2 million of work would include open space for soccer, lacrosse and football, two youth baseball fields which could also be used for adult softball, paved walking trail, sand volleyball courts, playground pavilion, restrooms and parking. Fifteen of Meridian's 29 designated parks will get upgrades. A system-wide goal involves improved accessi-

bility of trails in parks. Maisner said just one-third of a mile out of 20 miles of park system trails are paved.

The plan also features an upgrade to all playground facilities, with the intent of ensuring they are accessible and meet safety requirements. Maisner said they will also investigate providing shade for play equipment, whether that's trees or shade structures.

"We're very excited about the possibility of improving the park system," she continued.

"We've gotten by for

eight years by providing maintenance and keeping up with things. Making the necessary infrastructure improvements is important to the integrity of the park system over the next few years."

Parks Commission chair Todd Wilson praised recreation department staff for keeping township parks maintained over time on tight budgets.

"We have all kinds of great ideas for things to do and no money to do them," Wilson said. "There are things we haven't been able to take

care of due to lack of funds."

Fixes, upgrades and maintenance not covered by the proposed millage will continue to be addressed with grant funds, Wilson said - something that's been done all along. One grant request is being sought to make tennis courts at Hillbrook Park playable again.

"We want to be proactive and holistic about all the things we can," Wilson said. "But we are struggling to keep up the level of service people have come to expect."

The new two-thirds

mill, approved Aug. 5, would cost an additional \$67 annually for a home with a taxable value of \$100,000.

The two park millages would provide \$1,527,000 for the first two years that they overlap and cost the average homeowner about \$100 annually over that period. The initial .317 millage would be allowed to expire, if voters approve the new tax this fall.

The millages are earmarked for local parks, not natural areas funded the Land Preservation tax or two county parks.

Lansing State Journal

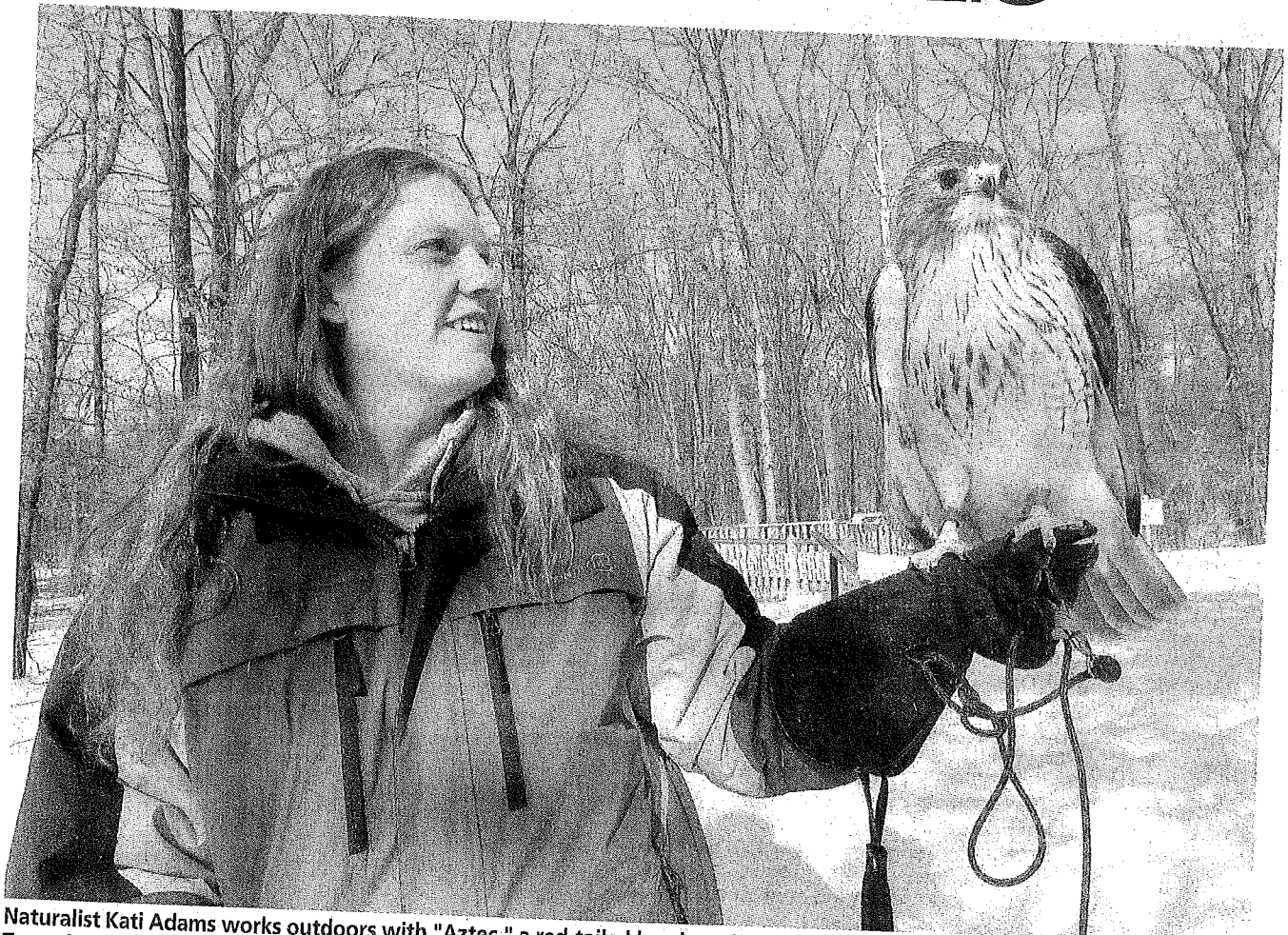
A GANNETT

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 2008

THE POWER OF KNOWING SINCE 1855

MERIDIAN TOWNSHIP PLANS \$6M OVERHAUL OF PARKS

INVESTING IN PARKS



Naturalist Kati Adams works outdoors with "Aztec," a red-tailed hawk, on Wednesday at Harris Nature Center in Meridian Township. The center would get an extra \$460,000 under a proposed township millage. ROD SANFORD/LSJ

PARK PROJECTS AT A GLANCE

Here's how Meridian Township's Capital Improvement Program calls for spending potential new tax revenue on the township's 29 parks.

- » **Towner Road Park:** \$2.2 million
- » **Central Park:** \$1.05 million
- » **Wonch Park:** \$700,000
- » **Legg Park:** \$591,000
- » **Harris Nature Center:** \$460,000
- » **Marshall Park:** \$455,000
- » **Meridian Riverfront Park:** \$432,000
- » **Hartrick Park:** \$280,000
- » **Hillbrook Park:** \$260,000
- » **Nancy Moore Park:** \$240,000
- » **North Meridian Road Park:** \$172,000
- » **Orlando Park Trail:** \$138,000
- » **Snell Towar Recreation Center:** \$100,000
- » **Newton Road Park:** \$80,000
- » **Ottawa Hills Park:** \$50,000

A

\$6 million revamp of Meridian Township's park system is being envisioned over the next 12 years but hinges on voters approving a tax increase in August.

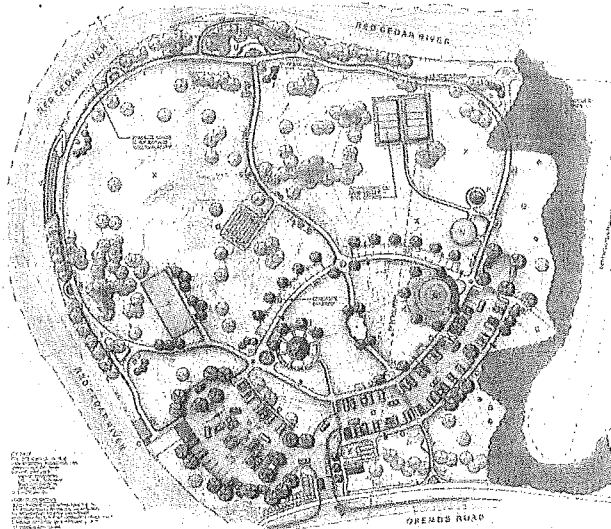
The millage proposal — for .67 mills — will be on the Aug. 5 ballot and would add to an existing millage of .31 mills. That millage was originally approved in 1984, mainly for maintenance and operations.

Since then, the park system has nearly tripled from 325 acres to more than 900 acres, and residents in several surveys have pointed to the parks as the reason they like living in the township, LuAnn Maisner, parks and recreation director said. The township has 29 parks.

"We're very excited about the possibility of improving the park system," Maisner said. "We've gotten by for eight years by providing maintenance and keeping up with things. Making the necessary infrastructure improvements is important to the integrity of the park system over the next few years."

The millage increase would cost the owner of a home with a taxable value of \$100,000 an additional \$67 a year.

The two park millages totaling just less than 1 mill would provide \$1.52 million for the two years they overlap. Township officials said the initial



See PARKS, Page 2A

Concept for Wonch Park off Okemos Road. COURTESY IMAGE

"We have all kinds of great ideas ... and no money ..."

TODD WILSON

township's parks. Maisner said slightly more than a half-mile out of 20 miles of park system trails are paved. » Upgrading all playground facilities and ensuring they are accessible and meet safety requirements.

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Fixes, upgrades and maintenance not covered by the proposed millage will continue to be addressed with grant funds, Wilson said — something the commission already has been doing. One grant request is being sought to make tennis courts at Hillbrook Park playable again.

The millage would not be used for natural areas funded by a land preservation tax or either Lake Lansing park, which are county-owned.

Parks

Continued from Page 1A

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The new funds would address needs outlined in the parks commission's 2014-2019 Capital Improvement Program, including the development of the Towner Road Park.

Located just south of Saginaw Highway, Towner Road Park is "really a top priority" because the park's development would address a lack of recreational facilities in the northern portion of the township, Maisner said. The central and southern sections of the township have Nancy Moore Park and Hulett Park, respectively.

The site, acquired in 2007 with the intent of building an athletic complex, is "ready to go. We feel strongly about moving forward," she said. Highlights of the plan include:

- » Using \$2.2 million to develop open space at Towner Road Park for soccer, lacrosse and football, two youth baseball fields that could also be used for adult softball, a paved walking trail, sand volleyball courts, playground pavilion, restrooms and parking.
- » Improving accessibility of trails across the

Lansing State Journal

LOCAL & STATE

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EDITOR: AL WILSON | METRO@LSJ.COM | 377-1154 | WWW.LSJ.COM

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Despite temperatures in the low teens, people enjoy ice fishing Saturday at Central Park South as part of the annual Meridian Township Ice Fishing Derby. ROBERT KILLIPS/LANSING STATE JOURNAL



Lee Dudasik, 8, right, hauls in a fish as his sister Lillian, 6, grabs it at the annual Meridian Township Ice Fishing Derby.

Kids get chance to try their hand at ice fishing

By Lindsay VanHulle
lvanhulle@lsj.com

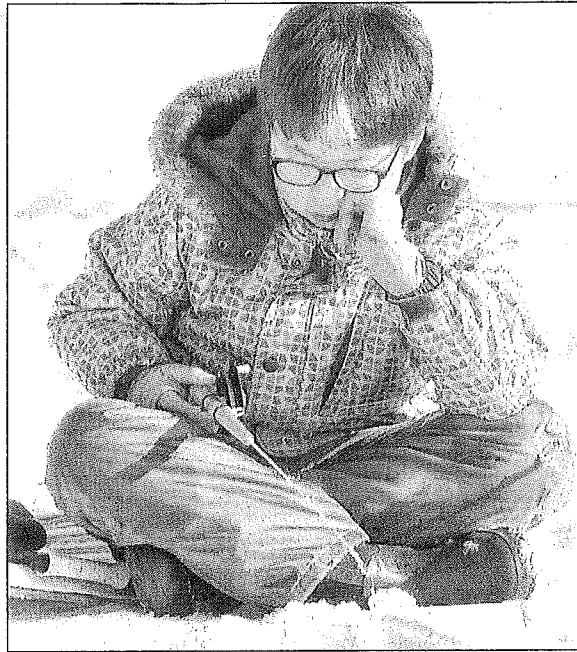
OKEMOS—Lee Dudasik is not an expert ice fisherman.

The 8-year-old from Haslett had never tried it before Saturday, when he dropped a line at Central Park South in Okemos as part of Meridian Township's annual Ice Fishing Derby.

Catching a fish, it turns out, isn't much harder on a frozen pond than in open water. The 6.5-inch fish Lee pulled from the water was the largest of any caught during the three-hour event. His prize: A fishing rod.

"After a few minutes of waiting, I got a bite and I pulled it up and it was huge," said

See FISHING, Page 3B



Insung Lee, 12, concentrates Saturday on the bobber floating in the icy water at the Meridian Township Ice Fishing Derby. ROBERT KILLIPS/LANSING STATE JOURNAL

Fishing

Continued from Page 1B

Lee, a second-grader whose prize-winning fish was the only one he caught. "It's great."

Meridian Township parks officials Saturday hosted the derby in conjunction with a statewide free fishing weekend, which allows kids — and

adults — to try their hands at winter angling without needing to purchase a license.

About 45 people caught more than 40 fish, officials said. The event relies on favorable weather and was helped this year by a deep freeze and an estimated foot of ice below the pond's surface, said Mark Stephens, a township park commissioner and organizer.

MERIDIAN TOWNSHIP PLANS \$6M OVERHAUL OF PARKS

INVESTING

IN PARKS

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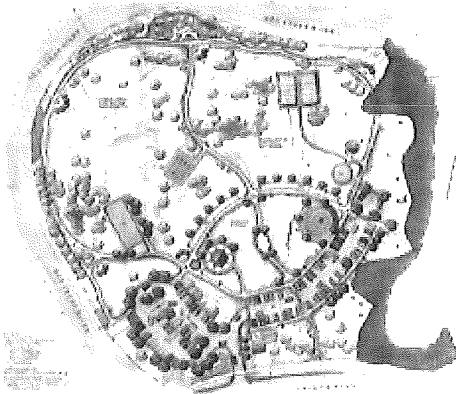
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See PARKS, Page 2A



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ROD SANFORD/LSJ



Concept for Wonch Park off Okemos Road. COURTESY IMAGE

Article Continued Below

[See PARKS on Page A02](#)

Parks

Continued from Page 1A

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- » Improving accessibility of trails across the township's parks. Maisner said slightly more than a half-mile out of 20 miles of park system trails are paved.
- » Upgrading all playground facilities and ensuring they are accessible and meet safety requirements.

Parks Commission chairman Todd Wilson praised recreation department staff for keeping the parks maintained on tight budgets.

"We have all kinds of great ideas for things to do and no money to do them," Wilson said. "There are things we haven't been able to take care of due to lack of funds." Fixes, upgrades and maintenance not covered by the proposed millage will continue to be addressed with grant funds, Wilson said — something the commission already has been doing. One grant request is being sought to make tennis courts at Hillbrook Park playable again. The millage would not be used for natural areas funded by a land preservation tax or either Lake Lansing park, which are countyowned.

"We have all kinds of great ideas ... and no money ..."

TODD WILSON

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Meridian Township plans \$6M overhaul of parks

Feb. 13, 2014 | 5Comments

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Harris Nature Center in Meridian Township Wednesday Feb. 11, 2014. (Lansing State Journal | Rod Sanford) / Rod Sanford

Written by Dawn Parker

A \$6 million revamp of Meridian Township's park system is being envisioned over the next 12 years but hinges on voters approving a tax increase in August.

FILED UNDER

News Local News

The millage proposal — for .67 mills — will be on the Aug. 5 ballot and would add to an existing millage of .31 mills. That millage was originally approved in 1984, mainly for maintenance and operations.

Since then, the park system has nearly tripled from 325 acres to more than 900 acres, and residents in several surveys have pointed to the parks as the reason they like living in the township,

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LuAnn Maisner, parks and recreation director said. The township has 29 parks.

"We're very excited about the possibility of improving the park system," Maisner said. "We've gotten by for eight years by providing maintenance and keeping up with things.

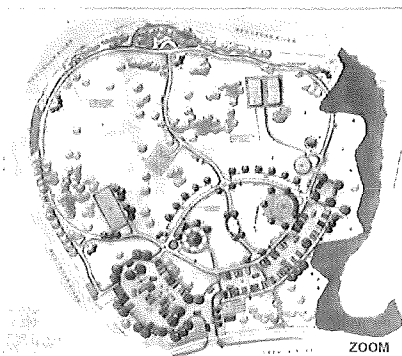
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Concent for Worch Park off Okemos Road. / Courtesy art

Park projects at a glance

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Making the necessary infrastructure improvements is important to the integrity of the park system over the next few years."

The millage increase would cost the owner of a home with a taxable value of \$100,000 an additional \$67 a year.

The two park millages totaling just less than 1 mill would provide \$1.52 million for the two years they overlap. Township officials said the initial millage of .31 mills would be allowed to expire in 2016 if the new millage is approved.

The new funds would address needs outlined in the parks commission's 2014-2019 Capital Improvement Program, including the development of the Towner Road Park.

Located just south of Saginaw Highway, Towner Road Park is "really a top priority" because the park's development would address a lack of recreational facilities in the northern portion of the township, Maisner said. The central and southern sections of the township have Nancy Moore Park and Hulett Park, respectively.

The site, acquired in 2007 with the intent of building an athletic complex, is "ready to go. We feel strongly about moving forward," she

said.

Highlights of the plan include:

- Using \$2.2 million to develop open space at Towner Road Park for soccer, lacrosse and football, two youth baseball fields that could also be used for adult softball, a paved walking trail, sand volleyball courts, playground pavilion, restrooms and parking.
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Mom accused of dismembering son Feb. 04, 2014



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Spartan Stampede 2014



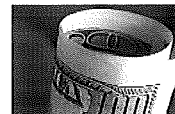
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request is being sought to make tennis courts at Hillbrook Park playable again.

The millage would not be used for natural areas funded by a land preservation tax or either Lake Lansing park, which are county-owned.

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Lansing-area kids try their hand at ice fishing

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Alex Pickens left, and his son Christian, 6, get some ice fishing lessons from Meridian Twp. Park Commissioner Mark Stephens Saturday. / Robert Killips/Lansing State Journal

Written by Lindsay VanHulle

OKEMOS — Lee Dudasik is not an expert ice fisherman.

FILED UNDER

The 8-year-old from Haslett had never tried it before Saturday, when he dropped a line at Central Park South in Okemos as part of Meridian Township's annual Ice Fishing Derby.

News Local News

Catching a fish, it turns out, isn't much harder on a frozen pond than in open water. The 6.5-inch fish Lee pulled from the water was the largest of any caught during the three-hour event. His prize: A fishing rod.

"After a few minutes of waiting, I got a bite and I pulled it up and it was huge," said Lee, a second-grader whose prize-winning fish was the only one he caught. "It's great."

Meridian Township parks officials Saturday hosted the derby in conjunction with a

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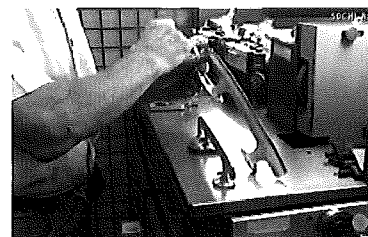
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statewide free fishing weekend, which allows kids — and adults — to try their hands at winter angling without needing to purchase a license.

About 45 people caught more than 40 fish during the event, officials said. It relies on favorable weather and was helped this year by a deep freeze and an estimated foot of ice below the pond's surface, said Mark Stephens, a township park commissioner and organizer.

A closer look at how skates are made Feb. 08, 2014



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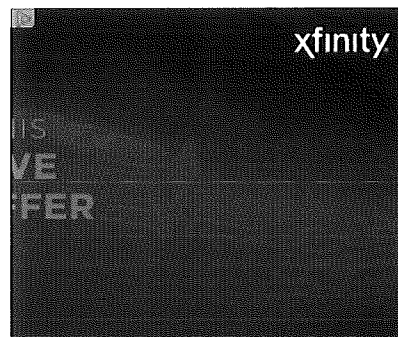
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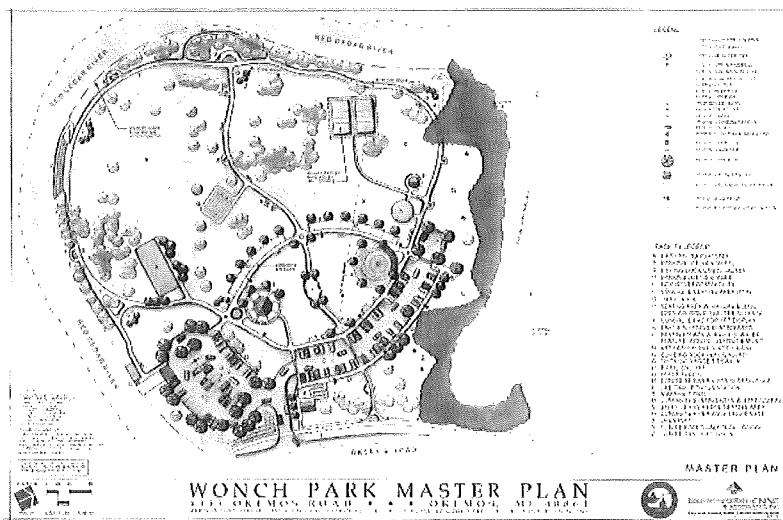
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Park Commission Pushes for New Millage

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February 15, 2014
By Whitney Burney
Meridian Times staff writer

New taxes are being considered to make Meridian Township parks safer, to add parking and other comforts.

"Hillbrook park needed a restroom the day it was built," said Todd Wilson, chair of the Meridian Township Park Commission. "Anyone who has sat through a baseball game

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Man Accused Of Killing Father Tries To Plead Guilty

Okemos senior named semi-finalist for Washington Crossing Foundation Scholarship

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Meridian Township Police Looking for Theft Suspect

Meridian Times

*Meridian and Okemos news by
Michigan State University students*

Park Commission Pushes for New Millage

Posted on [February 14, 2014](#) by [whitneyburney](#)

By Whitney Burney

Meridian Times staff writer

New taxes are being considered to make Meridian Township parks safer, to add parking and other comforts.

“Hillbrook park needed a restroom the day it was built,” said Todd Wilson, chair of the Meridian Township Park Commission. “Anyone who has sat through a baseball game and made the mistake of drinking too much beer knows that Hillbrook needs a restroom.”

Commissioners discussed pursuing a new millage. The current millage is not enough to support all of the needs of each location.

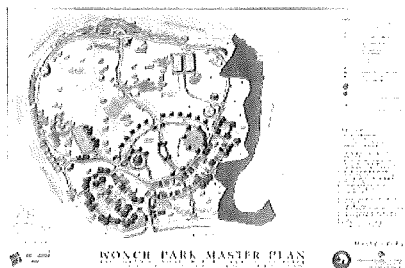
The parks currently face problems such as child safety due to broken jungle gym equipment, poor parking options and lack of facilities.

According to the commissioners, Hillbrook Park is not the only park that could seriously use updating. These updates have been difficult to accomplish with the lack of funds. For this reason, they have decided to campaign for a new millage.

With more money, the park commission would be able to complete projects that have been postponed like building a dog park within Legg Park.

“I think people would be willing to donate for a dog park,” said LuAnn Maisner, parks and recreation director. “People are not willing to donate to repaving a driveway. The dog park would be something that the community could get a lot of use of.”

This year, the committee hopes to replace the pavilion at Wonch Park. It has been there for nearly 20 years. The pavilion does not have a water source or electricity for the parks’ guests.



A sketch of the future renovations of Wonch Park

In the future, the commission hopes to build a skate park in Marshall Park for local youth and add a trail walk to Wonch Park for older residents, a group the commission believes has not been catered to properly.

The next park commission meeting will be at 6:00pm Mar. 11.

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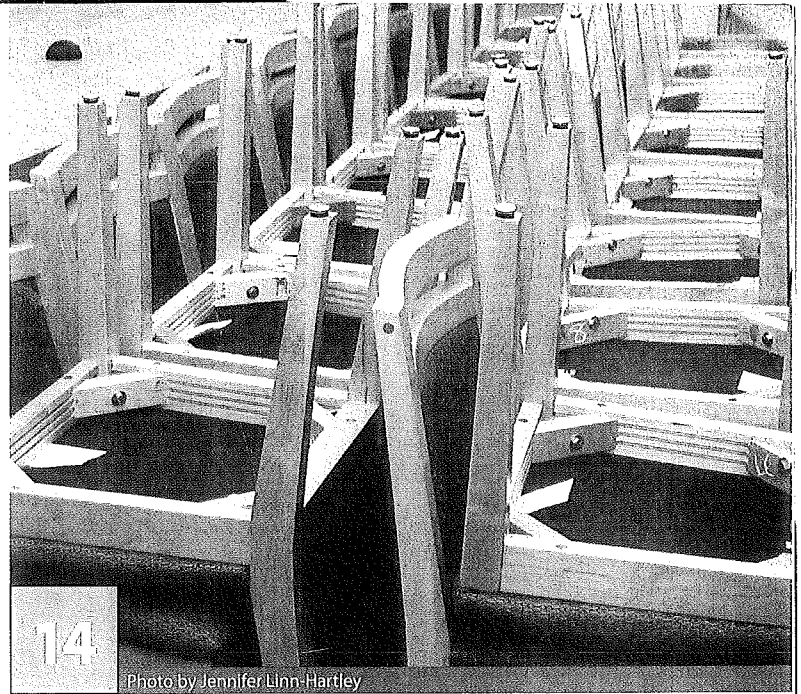


Photo by Jennifer Linn Hartley

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Community residents share their photos with readers.

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Your guide to music, theater, kid stuff and lots more.

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A fond farewell from this month's issue of the magazine.

PHOTO COVER

A red northern cardinal visits a bird feeder in the snow. Leftover vegetation in your garden can attract squirrels and cardinals to feed. See related stories on pages 9 and 13.

Photo courtesy of Marlys Jacobi



You could be a community contributor too!

Karyn Harrison, a certified health coach, shares a healthy habit to practice this month on page 21. It's easy to join the community conversation; just email articles, photos, information and ideas to the email address shown below.

Get involved! Send your photos, stories or events to:

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Photo courtesy of Harris Nature Center



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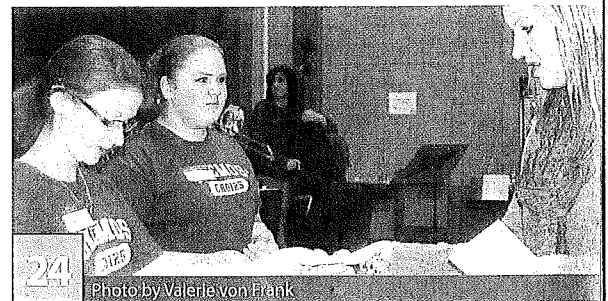


Photo by Valerie von Frank



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February at HNC

Harris Nature Center offers events for all ages this month.

compiled by Jennifer Linn-Hartley
Editor

February is the last full month of winter and Harris Nature Center has several events — both indoors and outdoors — planned for it.

Moonlit skiing

Glide along the moonlit trails of the Harris Nature Center as you ski or snowshoe through the sparkling snow on Saturday, Feb. 1 or Saturday, Feb. 22 from 6 - 9 p.m. There is a \$3 per person fee if you bring your own equipment and \$9 per person fee if you borrow our equipment.

To register and reserve your skis or snowshoes call (517) 349-3866 or send an email to hnc@meridian.mi.us.

Snowshoeing class

Learn to snowshoe at Harris Nature Center on Feb. 1.

The class teaches tips from an expert on how to stay warm in the cold, the practice of snowshoe techniques and guided snowshoeing on the park trails.



Visitors snowshoe at Meridian Township's Harris Nature Center.

Photo courtesy of Harris Nature Center

Harris Nature Center

Is located at 3998 Van Atta Road
in Meridian Township.

Call (517) 349-3866 or visit HNC's
page on meridian.mi.us for more
information.

The class is from 1-3 p.m. on Saturday, Feb. 1. Cost is \$15 per person if you bring your own equipment or \$20 per person if you borrow equipment from the nature center. If you are borrowing snowshoes, reservations must be made. To register call (517)348-3866 or email hnc@meridian.mi.us.

Winter photography class

Winter offers many photographic opportunities — from the beauty of

nature to outdoor sports. Five-time International Professional Award winning outdoor photographer, Ron St. Germain will share tips and techniques on taking professional- looking photos. This is a 3-week class on Wednesdays, Feb. 5 through 19 from 6:30-9 p.m. There is also an optional outdoor shoot on Saturday, Feb. 8 from 10 a.m. through 1 p.m. The fee for all four days is \$55 per person. Please register online at meridiantownship.mi.us. Bring your camera and owner's manual.

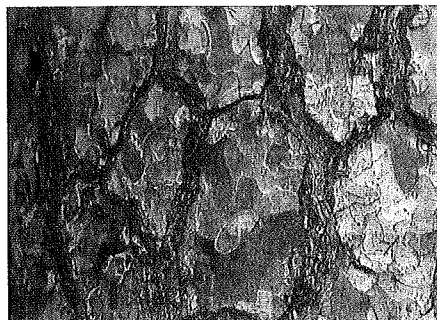
Owl prowling campfire

Enjoy a campfire while learning about owls and then join a naturalist for a guided walk to look for them on Saturday, Feb. 8 at 7 p.m. The fee is \$3 per person or \$7 per family.

IN the 1800s

In the 19th century, store-bought white sugar was only used for special occasions. Most families made their own sugar by tapping into their sugar maple trees. "Sugaring" began when the nights were cold and the days were warm, usually beginning in February or March and lasting for a month or more.

The warm days allowed the tree



Tree sap was collected and boiled for sugar

Photo courtesy of hibu

sap to drip into buckets. The sap was collected and boiled over an open fire to burn off the water. An amber liquid remained that could be used for syrup or processed further into brown sugar which would be used by the family all year.

—Jane Rose, Meridian Historical Village executive director

UPCOMING EVENTS

Schedules are subject to change.
Call venues to confirm event information.

Let us know about any upcoming events.
Email us at Okemos@hibu.com.

SATURDAY 1
Winter Farmers' Market at Meridian Mall
10 a.m. – 2 p.m.

WHAT: Come in from the cold to enjoy the Meridian Township Farmers' Market all winter long at the Meridian Mall. Approximately 25-30 vendors participate each market day, providing a variety of home grown and homemade goods. Find us in the JC Penny.
WHERE: Meridian Mall, 1982 W. Grand River Ave., Okemos.

SUNDAY 2
MSU College of Music: That's Amore
3 p.m.

WHAT: A "love-filled" afternoon of Italian music featuring the College of Music's vocal arts faculty, students, select choral ensembles, and special guests.
WHERE: Fairchild Theatre, MSU Auditorium, 426 Auditorium Rd., East Lansing.
INFO: Admission is \$20 for adults,

\$18 for seniors, \$10 for students.
Visit music.msu.edu.

THURSDAY 6 – SUNDAY 16
'Leaving Iowa'
Times vary

WHAT: Leaving Iowa is a postcard to anyone who has ever found himself or herself driving alone on a road, revisiting fond memories of his or her youth. This critically-acclaimed play is a hilarious, family-friendly comedy that is a toast to the idealism and character of parents from the "greatest generation," and a little roast of their dedication to the family road trip.

WHERE: Riverwalk Theatre/Community Circle Players, 228 Museum Drive, Lansing.

INFO: Thursday 7 p.m.; Friday-Saturday 8 p.m.; Sunday 2 p.m. Tickets are \$14 (\$12 for seniors). Call (517) 482-5700 for more information.

FRIDAY 7 – SUNDAY 9
Mid-Michigan Women's Expo
Times vary

WHAT: The Mid-Michigan Women's Expo is the largest and the favorite public show for women offering a balance of education, entertainment and enjoyment in an event tailored for the lives of busy women. More than 275 women-owned and focused businesses will display a wide range of products and services targeted specifically toward women.

WHERE: Lansing Center, 333 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing.

INFO: Feb. 7, 10 a.m. – 8 p.m.; Feb. 8, 10 a.m. – 6 p.m.; Feb. 9, 11 a.m. – 5 p.m. Advance tickets are \$7 each at area Meijer stores. Admission at the door is \$9 for adults and \$7 for children ages 6-14. For more information visit: kohlerexpo.com/Events/Mid-Michigan-Womens-Expo-2014/Overview.aspx

SUNDAY 9 – SUNDAY 23
Diary of a Worm, a Spider, and a Fly

1:30 p.m. and 4 p.m.

WHAT: Who knew it was so tough to be a bug? Join a swarm of young crawlers on a musical journey to discover who they are and what makes them special. Youngsters have different issues growing up, and so do their counterparts in the insect and worm world.

WHERE: Wharton Center for Performing Arts, 750 E. Shaw Lane, East Lansing.

INFO: Admission is \$12. Call 1-800-WHARTON or visit whartoncenter.com.

MONDAY 10
Wharton Center
Worldview Lecture Series:
Tony Kushner
7:30 p.m.

WHAT: Tony Kushner is best-known for his Pulitzer Prize and Tony Award-winning play *Angels in America: a Gay Fantasia on*

National Themes. He takes glee in tackling the most difficult subjects in contemporary history and confronting his audience with funny, agonizing and startling truths. He was nominated for an Oscar for the Steven Spielberg film, *Lincoln*

WHERE: Wharton Center for Performing Arts, 750 E. Shaw Lane, East Lansing.

INFO: Admission is \$20. Visit whartoncenter.com for more information.

TUESDAY 11
Lansing Symphony Orchestra: Special Event - Blakemore Trio (Chamber)
7:30 p.m.

WHAT: Okemos native, cellist Felix Wang, returns to the Lansing area after a smash-hit performance during the Lansing Symphony's 2011/2012 season. This time he is bringing his chamber group from Vanderbilt's Blair School of Music, the critically-acclaimed Blakemore Trio. Known for their expressive versatility, this trio not only programs great master works of the past, but inspiring compositions of today.

WHERE: Plymouth Congregational Church, 2001 E. Grand River Ave., Lansing Charter Twp.

INFO: Ticket prices vary. Visit Lansingsymphony.org for more information.

WEDNESDAY 12
Eisenhower Dance Ensemble: Red, Hot, and Blue
7:30 p.m.

WHAT: On the heels of the popular Motown in Motion Act One Family Series performance at Wharton Center in 2012, the Eisenhower Dance Ensemble returns with *Red, Hot, and Blue!* This powerfully compelling evening of passion, humor, and sheer joy showcases an array of works by renowned choreographers. **WHERE:** Wharton

Fitbody Challenge - Crossbody - Kickboxing - Blitz - Zumba - Bowka - Pilates - Core Blast
-Salsa - Stretch & Tone - Spartan Barre - Jump & Turn -

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UPCOMING EVENTS

Schedules are subject to change.
Call venues to confirm event information.

Let us know about any upcoming events.
Email us at Okemos@hibu.com.

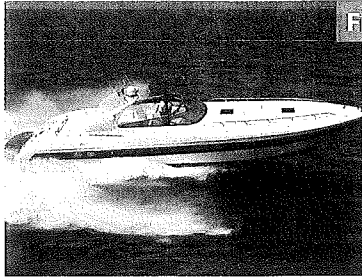


Photo courtesy of hibu

Friday, Feb. 14 - Sunday, Feb. 16

Lansing Boat Show

WHAT: More than 36 manufacturers will be showing off what's new for 2014.

WHERE: Lansing Center, 333 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing.

INFO: Cost is \$5 for adults, \$4 for seniors, \$3 for children over age 5, and free for those under 5.

FRIDAY 14 - SUNDAY 16 Lansing Boat Show Times vary

WHAT: The Lansing Boat Show is set to invade the Lansing Center packing the main exhibition halls with everything that is new for 2014. More than 36 manufacturers will be represented. The Lansing Boat Show is Michigan's first look at new product designs and technology for 2014. The Lansing show features an intimate relaxed look at a great variety of brands and styles to fit Michiganders active lifestyles. The Lansing Boat Show offers you all the convenience you have come to expect from the intimate confines of the Lansing Center.

WHERE: Lansing Center, 333 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing.
INFO: Friday Noon-8 p.m., Saturday 10 a.m.- 8 p.m., Sunday 11 a.m. - 4 p.m. Admission is \$5 for adults, \$4 for seniors, \$3 for children and children 5 and under free. Visit lansingboatshow.com for more information.

SATURDAY 15 Winter Farmers' Market at Meridian Mall 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

WHAT: Come in from the cold to enjoy the Meridian Township Farmers' Market all winter long at the Meridian Mall. Approximately 25-30 vendors participate each market day, providing a variety of home grown and homemade goods. Find us in the JC Penny.
WHERE: Meridian Mall, 1982 W. Grand River Ave., Okemos.

SATURDAY 15 "Hamlet" 3 p.m.

WHAT: The Acting Company tackles Hamlet for the first time in its 40-year history. The play

dramatizes the tortuous route Prince Hamlet takes to exact revenge for his father's murder.

WHERE: Wharton Center for Performing Arts, 320 Wharton Center, East Lansing.

INFO: Admission is \$40. Visit whartoncenter.com for more information.

SATURDAY 15 Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead 8 p.m.

WHAT: Tom Stoppard's hilarious Tony Award-winning play centers on the misadventures of two minor characters from Hamlet. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead is structured as the inverse of Hamlet: the title characters are the leads, and Hamlet himself has only a small part. The duo appears in this comedy primarily when they are off-stage in Shakespeare's play. The play focuses on free will vs. determinism, the search for value, and the impassivity of certainty framed by the comedy, cleverness, and ambiguities inherent in language. This is signature Stoppard, author of *The Real Thing*, and *The Coast of Utopia* as well as the film *Shakespeare in Love*. Tony Award winner John Rando directs.
WHERE: Wharton Center for Performing Arts, 320 Wharton Center, East Lansing.
INFO: Admission is \$40. Visit whartoncenter.com for more information.

Center for Performing Arts, 320 Wharton Center, East Lansing.
INFO: Tickets from \$10. Visit whartoncenter.com for more information.

THURSDAY 13 Homeschool Science Day Times vary

WHAT: Pre-K and k: Light Exploration Grades 1 and 2: Light and Color Science Grades 3 and 4: Nanotechnology 2 Grades 5 and 6: Nuclear Science.

WHERE: Impression 5 Science Center, 200 Museum Dr., Lansing.
INFO: Times: Pre-K and k: 12:45-1:30 p.m., 1st and 2nd: 1:45-2:30 p.m., 3rd and 4th: 12:45-1:30 p.m., 5th and 6th: 1:45-2:45 p.m. Admission is \$5/child plus museum admission price. Contact: Katie at (517)485-8116 Ext.32 for reservations.

TU FOR MORE INFORMATION.

FRIDAY 14 Lansing Symphony Orchestra: Lights, Camera...The Oscars! 8 p.m.

WHAT: What better way to celebrate Valentine's Day than with the glitz and glam of the Oscars! This special pops concert features guest vocalists alongside your very own Lansing Symphony, performing songs and music from the beloved films that have won Academy Awards. Reminisce to the themes and melodies of *Gone with the Wind*, *Rocky*, *Titanic* and much more! Be a part of the movies that we all love, with the excitement of the red carpet.

WHERE: Wharton Center for Performing Arts, 750 E. Shaw Lane, East Lansing.
INFO: Visit lansingsymphony.org. Ticket prices vary.

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Park Commission Meeting
March 11, 2014

11. NEW BUSINESS

1. Wonch Park Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund Grant Resolution
2. Harris Nature Center Foundation Nature Exploration Area
 - Resolution of Support of Grant Submission to Jackson National Life Foundation
 - Resolution of Support of Grant Submission to Dart Foundation

MEMORANDUM

TO: Park Commission

FROM:



LuAnn Maisner, CPRP
Director of Park and Recreation

DATE: March 6, 2014

RE: Resolution to support DNR Grant Application Wonch Park

During the Park Commission special meeting on February 4, 2014, the Park Commission discussed and evaluated possible projects for grant consideration. By consensus the Commission unanimously agreed to continue with implementation of the Wonch Park Master Plan by requesting funding assistance for a new pavilion and amenities through the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund. The grant request will include a new pavilion, 4- deciduous trees, electricity, water, and 2- universally accessible grills and 3-handicapped accessible picnic tables. The estimated project cost is \$250,000 with a Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund (MNRT) fund request of 75% (\$187,500) and a local match from the General Fund of 25% (\$62,500).

A public hearing is being conducted during the March 11, 2014 Park Commission meeting. Prior to the public hearing, letters of support for the MNRT Grant submission were received from the Meridian Township Downtown Development Authority, Meridian Area Resource Center, Meridian Township Economic Development Corporation and Ingham County Parks.

Wonch Park is a highly utilized facility for picnics and activities and the existing pavilion is no longer effectively meeting the needs of our park users.

Resolution for consideration is attached.

RESOLUTION

At a regular meeting of the Park Commission of the Charter Township of Meridian, Ingham County, Michigan, held at the Meridian Municipal Building, in said Township on the ___ day of March, 2014 at 7:00 p.m., Local Time.

PRESENT:

ABSENT:

The following resolution was offered by Commissioner _____ and supported by Commissioner _____:

WHEREAS, the Michigan Department of Natural Resources accepts grant requests from local units of government to assist in the development of recreation properties; and

WHEREAS, it is possible to have up to 75% of the total project cost funded through this grant program; and

WHEREAS, the Park Commission is interested in the continued improvement of Meridian Township's parks and recreation system; and

WHEREAS, Meridian Township has prepared a grant application for submission to the Michigan Department of Natural Resources for the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund Program for an estimated \$250,000 of improvements to Wonch Park that includes a picnic shelter and associated amenities that will provide recreation opportunities and accessibility for visitors of all abilities; and

WHEREAS, Meridian Township has been working in cooperation with adjoining communities to improve accessibility and associated features to the Red Cedar River water trail; and

WHEREAS, the grant request is outlined and justified in the 2011-2015 Parks and Recreation Master Plan adopted by the Meridian Township Board and Park Commission, and is on file with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources; and

WHEREAS, this grant request was reviewed by the Park Commission at their meetings on February 4 and February 11 and during the public hearing on March 11, 2014.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE PARK COMMISSION OF THE CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN, INGHAM COUNTY, MICHIGAN, as follows:

To support submission of a grant application to the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund Program in the amount of \$187,500 for improvements to Wonch Park, including a new pavilion, water, electricity, 4 deciduous trees, 2 universally accessible grills, and 3 handicapped accessible picnic tables, and provide a local 25% match (\$62,500) funded by the Meridian Township General Fund.

ADOPTED:

YEAS:

NAYS:

The resolution passed.

STATE OF MICHIGAN)
) ss
COUNTY OF INGHAM)

I, the undersigned, the duly qualified and acting Chair of the Park Commission, Charter Township of Meridian, Ingham County, Michigan, DO HEREBY CERTIFY that the foregoing is a true and a complete copy of a resolution adopted at a regular meeting of the Park Commission on the ____ day of March, 2014.

Todd Wilson
Park Commission Chair

RESOLUTION

At a regular meeting of the Park Commission of the Charter Township of Meridian, Ingham County, Michigan, held at the Meridian Municipal Building, in said Township on the ___ day of March, 2014 at 7:00 p.m., Local Time.

PRESENT:

ABSENT:

The following resolution was offered by Commissioner _____ and supported by Commissioner _____:

WHEREAS, the Harris Nature Center was founded in 1997 to provide a connection with nature for adults and children throughout the Township through programming, special events and casual visits; and

WHEREAS, the Harris Nature Center Foundation was established in 2006 to raise funds to support operations and capital improvements for the Harris Nature Center; and

WHEREAS, a plan has been developed to create an environmental exploration area for youth to play in the out-of-doors at the Harris Nature Center utilizing many natural elements from nature; and

WHEREAS, the Harris Nature Center Foundation has been fundraising to support construction of this new play area through silent auctions, annual giving programs and seeking grants from other organizations, and

WHEREAS, the Harris Nature Center Foundation has prepared a grant application for submission to the Jackson National Life Foundation for construction of phase I of the Youth Nature Exploration Area at the Harris Nature Center which will provide environmental education through play opportunities for all visitors with an estimated project cost of \$25,000; and

WHEREAS, the Harris Nature Center Foundation is requesting \$5,000 from the Jackson National Life Foundation to assist with funding; and

WHEREAS, the Youth Nature Exploration Area is outlined and justified in the 2010-2015 Parks and Recreation Master Plan adopted by the Meridian Township Board and Park Commission; and

WHEREAS, the Meridian Township Park Commission is committing up to \$8,000 of cash and/or in-kind service toward the entire project from the Park Millage Fund.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE PARK COMMISSION OF THE CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN, INGHAM COUNTY, MICHIGAN, as follows:

Move to support submission of a grant application by the Harris Nature Center Foundation to the Jackson National Life Foundation for construction of a nature exploration area at the Harris Nature Center with an estimated project cost of \$25,000, and committing up to \$8,000 in cash and/or in-kind service from the Township's Park Millage Fund to support this project.

ADOPTED: YEAS:

NAYS:

STATE OF MICHIGAN)
) ss
COUNTY OF INGHAM)

I, the undersigned, the duly qualified and acting Chair of the Park Commission, Charter Township of Meridian, Ingham County, Michigan, DO HEREBY CERTIFY that the foregoing is a true and a complete copy of a resolution adopted at a regular meeting of the Park Commission on the 11th day of March, 2014.

Todd Wilson
Park Commission Chair

RESOLUTION

At a regular meeting of the Park Commission of the Charter Township of Meridian, Ingham County, Michigan, held at the Meridian Municipal Building, in said Township on the ___ day of March, 2014 at 7:00 p.m., Local Time.

PRESENT:

ABSENT:

The following resolution was offered by Commissioner _____ and supported by Commissioner _____:

WHEREAS, the Harris Nature Center was founded in 1997 to provide a connection with nature for adults and children throughout the Township through programming, special events and casual visits; and

WHEREAS, the Harris Nature Center Foundation was established in 2006 to raise funds to support operations and capital improvements for the Harris Nature Center; and

WHEREAS, a plan has been developed to create an environmental exploration area for youth to play in the out-of-doors at the Harris Nature Center utilizing many natural elements from nature; and

WHEREAS, the Harris Nature Center Foundation has been fundraising to support construction of this new play area through silent auctions, annual giving programs and seeking grants from other organizations, and

WHEREAS, the Harris Nature Center Foundation has prepared a grant application for submission to the Dart Foundation for construction of phase I of the Youth Nature Exploration Area at the Harris Nature Center which will provide environmental education through play opportunities for all visitors with an estimated project cost of \$25,000; and

WHEREAS, the Harris Nature Center Foundation is requesting \$5,000 from the Dart Foundation to assist with funding; and

WHEREAS, the Youth Nature Exploration Area is outlined and justified in the 2010-2015 Parks and Recreation Master Plan adopted by the Meridian Township Board and Park Commission; and

WHEREAS, the Meridian Township Park Commission is committing up to \$8,000 of cash and/or in-kind service toward the entire project from the Park Millage Fund.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE PARK COMMISSION OF THE CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN, INGHAM COUNTY, MICHIGAN, as follows:

Move to support submission of a grant application by the Harris Nature Center Foundation to the Dart Foundation for construction of a nature exploration area at the Harris Nature Center with an estimated project cost of \$25,000, and committing up to \$8,000 in cash and/or in-kind service from the Township's Park Millage Fund to support this project.

ADOPTED: YEAS:

NAYS:

STATE OF MICHIGAN)
) ss
COUNTY OF INGHAM)

I, the undersigned, the duly qualified and acting Chair of the Park Commission, Charter Township of Meridian, Ingham County, Michigan, DO HEREBY CERTIFY that the foregoing is a true and a complete copy of a resolution adopted at a regular meeting of the Park Commission on the 11th day of March, 2014.

Todd Wilson
Park Commission Chair